

Innovations in South Australian Higher Education Profile

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Premier Rann's transmogrification of Adelaide from Premier Dunston's 'Athens of the South' to 'the Boston of the South' signals a major social innovation in higher education.

Changes in South Australian legislation and the national regulatory framework over the past 20 years have broken the monopoly of the state universities. A growth in a variety of higher education providers and The Premier's University City Project, which envisages Adelaide a global centre of education, enhance the public profile of the emerging higher education scenario.

SA higher education institutions recruit students from all over the world to their local and overseas campuses which increase pressure on accreditation authorities. The quality of institutions and courses is imperative to the ongoing success and growth of the SA higher education export industry.

For the purpose of the quality assurance of higher education in SA, the Quality Directorate DFEEST performs a number of roles. These include, *inter alia*, providing quality advice and information regarding Australian standards for registration and accreditation of higher education institutions and courses and utilising rigorous quality assurance mechanisms to ensure consumers are exposed to a quality product. The Directorate assists providers with their immediate needs arising regularly in response to changes in the global market.

Discussion will range over the following areas:

- different perspectives on changing profile of the higher education sector in South Australia;
- innovations in the regulatory framework locally and nationally in the global context;
- Quality Directorate's role in maintaining quality standards of higher education delivery;
- quality assurance and consumer protection mechanisms;
- substandard organisations.